

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05

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FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1094

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY

INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LILONGWE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

UNCLAS PRETORIA 2385

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PDEV, PINT, PINS, RH

SUBJECT: RHODESIA: STUDENTS PROTEST INTERNAL SETTLEMENT

1. PRESS ACCOUNTS REPORT THAT ON APRIL 24 A LARGE GROUP OF STUDENTS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF RHODESIA ATTEMPTED TO STAGE A PROTEST MARCH IN SALISBURY AGAINST THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT. THE STUDENTS, ESTIMATED IN PRESS ACCOUNTS TO NUMBER FROM 250 TO 800, REPORTEDLY GATHERED ON CAMPUS AND BEGAN THEIR MARCH INTO THE CITY CENTER, SOME 12 KILOMETERS AWAY. RHODESIAN POLICE APPARENTLY ESTABLISHED A CORDON ALONG THE MARCH ROUTE AND CONFRONTED THE STUDENTS THERE. IN WHAT WAS DESCRIBED AS A "TENSE" MEETING, THE POLICE TOLD STUDENTS TO DISPERSE OR BE FIRED UPON AND ARRESTED. THE STUDENTS DID DISPERSE AND NO ARRESTS WERE MADE. ONE POLICE OFFICER WAS UNCLASSIFIED

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QUOTED AS SAYING THE ORDER HAD BEEN GIVEN TO ARREST THE STUDENTS BUT IT WAS DECIDED AT THE LAST MOMENT TO AVOID CONFRONTATION. PRESS ACCOUNTS SAY THE INTENTION OF THE STUDENTS WAS TO DEMONSTRATE IN FRONT OF THE GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS. MOST WERE CARRYING PLACARDS DENOUNCING THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT; CONDEMNING "PUPPET" LEADERS MUZOREWA, CHIRAU AND SITHOLE; AND SUPPORTING THE PATRIOTIC FRONT. UPON THE RETURN TO CAMPUS,

THE PRESIDENT OF THE STUDENTS' UNION, ISHAMIL CHATIKOBO, WAS QUOTED AS SAYING, " AS STUDENTS WE WANT TO REGISTER OUR COMPLETE DISILLUSIONMENT AND THAT OF THE BLACK MASSES WITH THIS TREACHEROUS AGREEMENT."

2. COMMENT: IT IS DIFFICULT TO JUDGE WHAT DEPTH OF FEELING WAS REPRESENTED BY THIS MARCH. ONE FACULTY MEMBER TOLD REPORTERS THAT MOST BLACKS STAYED AWAY FROM CLASSES THAT DAY BECAUSE " THEY JUST DIDN'T WANT TO GET INVOLVED", WHICH MAY INDICATE ONLY A MINORITY OF STUDENTS SYMPATHIZED. THIS COULD, HOWEVER, BE DUE TO INTIMIDATION, AS IT WAS OBVIOUS THE POLICE AND AUTHORITIES WERE BENT ON ALLOWING NO EXPRESSION OF DISSENT. AS A MATTER OF FACT, ONE OF THE CHIEF STUDENT COMPLAINTS AFTER THE INCIDENT WAS REPORTEDLY THAT ANTI-ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSAL DEMONSTRATORS HAD BEEN ALLOWED IN SALISBURY DURING THE VANCE/OWEN VISIT WHEREAS ANTIINTERNAL SETTLEMENT DEMONSTRATORS WERE STOPPED.
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